

The PHONO GRAM

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JUL 16 1902

TWENTIETH NUMBER

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THE PHONOGRAPHIC WILL.

By W. H. SEDGWICK.

While traveling through the Western part of Ohio a short while ago, I formed the acquaintance of a gentleman who told me the following strange story.

One evening as we were seated in my room at the hotel enjoying an after dinner cigar and conversing upon the topics of the day, our talk finally branched out and took up the Phonograph, its past, present and future possibilities. My friend advocated the theory that the Phonograph was only in its infancy, and to support his argument he related the following, which for convenience, I will give in his own words.

“In the little town of Curtisville, among the Berkshire Hills, I was born and passed my early life. Not far from the homestead lived a widowed aunt, my father's only sister, with whom I was a favorite, and some of the brightest links in the chain of my life are the remembrances of those happy hours spent there in golden youth. My aunt was quite well-to-do, owning a large farm and having a few thousand dollars invested in stocks, besides being the possessor of considerable real estate in a neighboring town, which I fondly hoped (as she had often stated) would some day be mine. When I became of age she sent me to college, where I worked hard to gain an education, my ambition being to become a lawyer. I graduated with honors, came to this State, where I was admitted to the bar, and opened an office. I succeeded slowly, but surely; and after a while found myself enjoying a comfortable practice. After two years hard work I strated back East to visit my aunt, taking with me, as a present to her, an

Edison Phonograph, and a stock of excellent records, which I knew she would enjoy more than anything else I could bring her. I was almost certain she had never seen or heard a Phonograph, and subsequent events proved I was right. To say she was delighted would be putting it mildly, for she would sit for hours and listen to the music, never seeming to tire of asking me to explain how it was all done. The first evening I started the machine she said, 'Why, George, you are a wonderful musician!! It must have taken you a long while to learn to play and sing so nicely.' I finally told her I had nothing to do with it, as she, or anyone else, could do as well, and that the machine did it all. When I told her it belonged to her, she didn't believe it possible that I could part with the machine, until I told her I had one at my office that I used in connection with my business. 'What,' said she, 'do you play for your clients?' I explained in detail the value of the Phonograph to the business man and demonstrated the ease and simplicity of the operation until she was competent and thoroughly versed in the art of recording and reproducing sound; and soon she was experimenting in every way possible. One day she said to me, 'George, you know I have trouble with my heart, and am liable to die very suddenly. Now, I have an idea! As I live alone and may pass away with no one here to receive my last wishes, I am going to prepare the Phonograph every night, before retiring, so if I feel my end is near, I can then speak my last words and final farewell to those I love.'

My vacation being ended, I went back to my daily routine, and the incident passed out of my mind. The next Spring I was obliged to go to Europe on business for a wealthy client and remained there six weeks. On my

return, on looking over the files of newspapers that had accumulated during my absence I chanced upon the following obituary notice.,

“Died suddenly, on Thursday May 10th, 1900, Mrs.
“Jane Early, in her 56th year, of heart disease.
“Western papers please copy.”

Then in another column I read a full account of how she lived alone and was found dead in her bed by a neighbor who had called to see how she was getting along. Search had been made among her papers for a will, but none could be found, and it was supposed she had died intestate. Like a flash, (it was almost an inspiration) I thought of the Phonograph and wondered if she had left any last wishes to be carried out through its medium. It is needless to state I was a passenger on the first train going East. On my arrival I found my aunt had been dead three weeks and the reason a telegram had not been sent informing me of the sad occurrence was that they supposed me to be in Europe as I was not due in this country for some time to come, and they did not know my foreign address.

I went direct to my aunt's late residence, now gloomy and deserted, and as I passed up the path leading to the front door I looked towards the old fashioned veranda where in life she used to sit, and wondered if she still sat there in spirit, though unseen by mortal eyes. I entered and commenced my search for the Phonograph, it having been removed from its usual place. I found it stored away in the attic covered with dust, and probably forgotten. I carried it downstairs, along with the records, and started to reproduce them, intending to go over each one. I tried one after another without success, but on starting the fifth

record, discovered it was the one I had been searching for, and which was my aunt's last will and testament, her farewell to the world. This is what I heard:

"Know all men by this, that I, Mrs. Jane Early, being in sound mind, but knowing my hours are numbered, do give and bequeath, without reserve, all my wordly goods, personal property, real estate, stocks and bonds, all chattels and moneys belonging thereunto, to my beloved nephew, George Bradley, of Greenpoint, Ohio, and appoint him the Executor of the Estate, knowing the said nephew, George Bradley, to be an honest, upright man, and worthy of the good fortune which has come to him. Furthermore, I hereby enjoin all persons from interfering in any manner with his taking peaceful occupation and entering into possession of said property. Witness this day, my voice. Signed, Jane Early."

Imagine, if you can, my emotions, when I heard my aunt's voice from the grave. No one who had ever heard my aunt speak in life would fail to recognize it. I took the record, or will, and deposited it in the Surrogate's Office, who admitted it to probate. I proved it to be my aunt's voice beyond question, by fifty witnesses, and am now waiting for the decision of the Court as to whether this most novel will on a record would stand in law."

One half the fun of owning a Phonograph is making your own records.

—OPENER.

ANOTHER PHONOGRAPHIC WILL.

It is a retired Mississippi steamboat captain who is credited with the latest invention for preventing contests over the last will and testament of the wealthy. This benefactor of his race, being gifted with fine vocal powers, proposes, when he gets good and ready, to talk his last will and testament into a *Phonograph*, and in case of contest to have it turned on in court as proof sufficient for any jury that he was of sound and disposing mind.

It is hard to see how such evidence could be overthrown. No jury hearing from beyond the grave the voice of a Tilden or a Fayerweather or a Hilton would hesitate about giving a verdict in favor of the will. And then think of the saving of expense ! Instead of employing for the defense an army of lawyers at the cost of an army of soldiers, the only expense would be that of dropping a nickel in the slot and the evidence would be forthcoming.

There is in this idea so much hope of escaping the dreary, costly and inevitable will contests that one almost wishes that the inventor might die and that his heirs would contest a will made in this manner, in order that we might learn how the plan would work.—From *The New York World*.

THE TRAMP FAINTED AWAY

A tramp rang a doctor's door-bell, and asked the pretty woman who open the door if she would be so kind as to ask the doctor if he had a pair of old trousers he would kindly give away. "I am the doctor" said the smiling young woman."

PHONOGRAPH MUSIC LIGHTENS LABOR.

Another new use for the Phonograph has been discovered. It has been said that love lightens labor. I have found that music also will have the same effect. The city electric railway runs by my home, and one afternoon I saw a large force of colored men, evidently in the last stages of fatigue, at work on the track a short distance away. They soon were opposite our parlor window, and I set up my Edison Phonograph using the 56 inch horn; and, drawing aside the lace curtains, pointed the horn out toward the workmen. It seemed oh such hard work for them, tamping ties out there in the broiling sun, and the swing was very slow. I started with the "Coon band Contest" and they looked around with a jerk and listened with all ears. In a few moments they had taken up the swing of the cake walk, and by gradually raising the speed, I soon had them tamping away in perfect unison, about thirty of them, all striking at once and increasing with the increased speed of the record. Their grins, too, were in unison. They were delighted. I gave them some more coon music and by carefully timing the speed easily induced them to do at least a third more work than they would have done otherwise, and I am sure that the work was less laborious.

With many men on work of this character, this method would prove of vast importance to contractors. The men work better and faster, and are kept in much better humor. It is not impossible that incipient strikes could be prevented by the use of Phonographs, judiciously placed, on other lines as well as railroad building. I believe that few employers know how much they lose not looking a little after

the pleasure as well as comfort of their laborers. With a good brass band managed judiciously and at the right time, I think I could prevent a large percentage of the strikes that happen so often. The Superintendent of our electric line, hearing of my experiment, now proposes to have Phonograph concerts regularly for the benefit of the men and their families. It's a very cheap good humor breeder as I already knew.

FRANKLIN L. PAYNE.

Reprinted from Issue of January, 1901, by request.

AN INSTRUMENT OF SATAN

"Its Master's Voice?"

The Winnipeg (Manitoba) *Free Press* prints the following interesting communication, which will be appreciated by those who have heard the machine:

"Sir—I would crave a small portion of your space to protest on behalf of a long suffering public against a new plague, which a too advanced development of misdirected genius has inflicted on the residents in the south end of the city. We have long borne with the wailing of our neighbors' cats; and the midnight howlings of their dogs are merely the outpourings of nature's promptings in their animal world. We have endured with patience the evil smell from the drains which a too economic corporation refuse to flush. We do not grumble at the Plutonic heat with which a wise destiny is wilting us. We accept all these things as inevitable and bare our backs to the rod, but surely we might be spared the GRAM-O-PHONE, which a mistaken kindness of heart, in the misguided desire of the

owner for our musical education, allows to pour its harsh and unearthly notes into our unwilling ears. Truly one man's meat is another man's poison, but heaven forgive the sinner who wakes such evil thoughts in the minds of his neighbors as the owner of that GRAM-O-PHONE produces on these nights when the temperature alone is quite sufficient to remind us that there is a hell, without having to listen to the voices of the damned, tortured by the Devil in Hell.

Owner of that instrument of Satan, torture us on Sundays, as it your wont, but let us sleep !

A MIDNIGHT SUFFERER."

(Or perhaps the writer of this letter drank strong coffee before retiring? —Ed.)



AS AN AID TO BURGLARS.

Burglars are giving the police a peck of trouble in Tremont, New York City. The flat of Max Goldberg was entered recently, and about \$400 worth jewelry and clothing stolen. Mr. Goldberg and his wife had only stepped out for a few minutes. They bought a Phonograph a few weeks ago, and furnished plenty of amusement for their

neighbors. As soon as the thieves got into the house they set the Phonograph running to cover the noise of plundering and went through the house, while the machine ground out some of the latest songs. Goldberg says that hereafter when he goes calling, he will lock his Phonograph in a case.—From the *New York Sun*.

THE PHONOGRAPH AS A BURGLAR ALARM.

A South Side man residing in a big apartment house has been robbed two or three times in the past years and finally grew tired of it and set about devising some means of warding off the robbers, which would not necessitate some one remaining in the flat every evening. Not only does he leave the gas lighted, but he has purchased a Phonograph which talks in a loud and resonant tone for a time and then throws out a few remarks in a deeper voice, accompanied by much laughter. The record is that of a conversation between two men and was made to order. The listener outside of the door of the flat would swear two large, burly men were in the room, and, as the conversation is a long one relative to the ease with which one of the men threw two other men downstairs a few nights before, it is calculated to make a burglar pause and reflect. A megaphone horn is attached to the machine, which increases the volume of the voices, and when the owner of the device wishes to take his wife to the theatre he sets the repeat switch, which will reproduce the conversation as long as the battery lasts, turns on the machine and goes blithely away. He has not been robbed since he invented the device.—From the *Chicago Chronicle*.

POINTS PERTAINING TO THE USE AND CARE OF THE EDISON PHONOGRAPH.

(Commenced in December number, 1900.)

By C. W. NOYES.

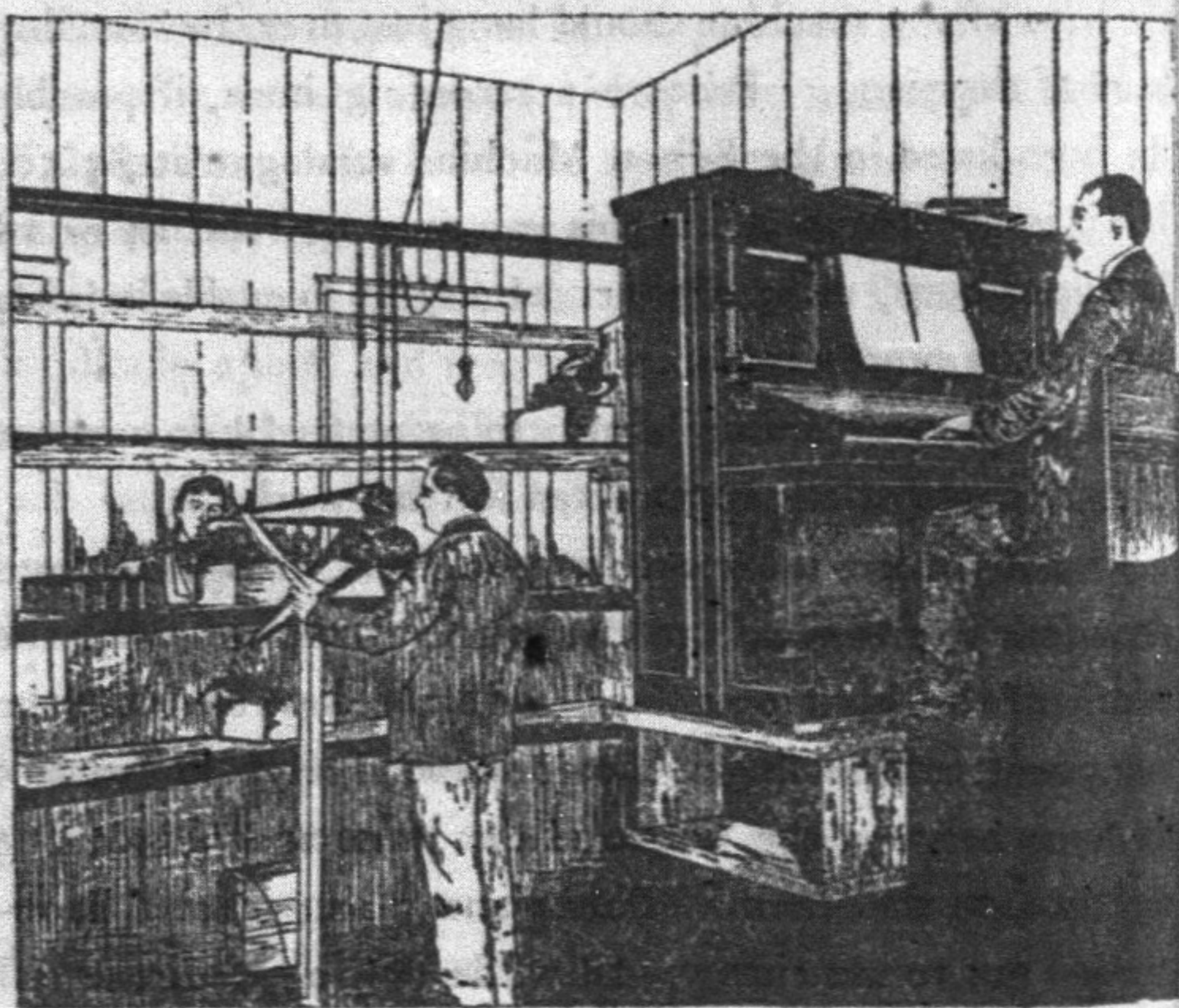
CHAPTER IX.—*Making Vocal Records.*

We will now suppose the reader wishes to make a vocal record with piano accompaniment. To do this it will be necessary to turn the piano with the back of same facing the machine, if it is an upright, but if a grand piano is used, the horn of the machine should hang just over the sounding board of the piano. Procure a recording horn, if possible the horn listed in the Edison Machine catalogue at \$3.50. If it is impossible to secure this you may use the 14 or 18 inch brass horn, using a rubber connection to enable its being hung at the proper angle.

The Edison recording horn is to be preferred on account of its being especially constructed for this work.

Now if you are using an upright piano, hang the horn about four or five feet from the back of the piano, with the mouth of the horn on a level with the key board of the instrument. The singer should stand directly in front of the horn between the horn and the piano and should sing directly into the horn. The piano player should be instructed not to use either pedal while playing; as if the soft pedal is used it deadens the tone and will not be loud when produced. If the loud pedal is used, it allows the tones of the piano to re-vibrate or in other words the tone hangs and is not softened by the back action of the key which cushions the strings, and this re-vibration makes the piano sound as if it were mixed up.

The singer should make an announcement of the title of the song he sings, also his full name, and it is well to announce also the date the record was made. The piano plays a short introduction and the singer begins. The Phonograph should be run at a speed of about 120 revolutions per minute. This may be determined by holding the finger tip against the set screw in the pulley wheel on machine and with a watch count the revolutions. It is not necessary to count the full minute, but count the quarter say 30 revolutions to the quarter minute.



The illustration which appears on this page is a pen and ink sketch made from a photograph and shows Mr. Byron G. Harlan singing one of his popular selections to the machines. The photograph was made while this song was in progress and the machines are Edison Phonographs.

The room is one of the many record rooms at the Edison Laboratory where all Edison records are made.

You will notice in this sketch that Mr. Harlan is singing to three machines at one time. This is the usual way Edison records are made and where so many records of the same selection are desired, it is of course necessary that the best master records be secured. The three records are taken from the machine and the best one selected and this one is used as a master record from which the records for the market are made. The process of making these records from the masters is called duplicating and is done on special machines which engrave one or more records from the master. They are very delicate instruments, with very fine adjustments ; and must be watched very closely by experts in order that the records are perfectly made.

The Electric Phonograph is used here for convenience sake only. It requires time to wind up a machine and time must be considered in making records of Professionals. The piano you will notice is raised off the floor and stands on a platform. This is in order that the keyboard of the piano be on a level with the horns of the machines and at the same time the singer is able to stand up while singing.

We have departed slightly from our theme in introducing this picture to our readers. We left our singer standing before the machine singing his song to the Phonograph and we will suppose by this time he has finished and we are ready to reproduce the record.

We will say the song was "Coon, Coon, Coon" and we reproduce it by removing the recorder from the arm of the machine and placing the reproducer in position. The announcement comes out clear and distinct and the song follows as it was sung. The first verse is fine ; now comes

the Chorus, "Coon-Coon-Coon-I wish my color"—here at this word "color" we find trouble for the singer, as he takes the high note for this word. He has forgotten to move his head away from the horn and the consequences are that this word blasts or over-vibrates. So he must try it again and must remember that when a high note is sung he must move his head away from the horn to compensate for the extra vibration.

Two or three attempts with your singer will enable him to make a good record and you should not become discouraged if you do not succeed the first time. After you have had some experience you will be able to instruct your singer to better advantage.

(To be continued.)

AS AN AID TO SHORT HAND REPORTERS.

At the recent Convention of the National Shorthand Reporters' Association held at Buffalo, which Association is composed of about seven hundred official court reporters from various parts of the country, considerable interest was shown in the Phonograph for use in connection with transcribing notes in court reporting. For the purpose of giving those present at the Convention a practical demonstration, Mr. Clarence E. Walker, an official court reporter from Louisville, Ky. (who recently reported the Goebel murder trial there), brought to Buffalo his whole outfit, consisting of the Phonograph and even his typewriter operators, and gave a practical demonstration of the rapidity with which notes could be transcribed by a court reporter by reading his notes into the machine and turning the cylinders over to several operators for transcribing.

The PHONOGRAM

SUBSCRIPTION THIRTY CENTS A YEAR
SINGLE NUMBERS, FIVE CENTS

Published by HERBERT A. SHATTUCK
at NUMBER 135 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

¶ Printed Monthly for those interested in the Arts of Recording and Reproducing Sound; also for those interested in Animated Pictures. ¶ Official Handbook of The Order of The Phonogram. ¶ A very Special Department will be devoted to all Questions and Answers relating to Phones, Graphs, Grams, and Scopes. Correspondence welcomed by the Editor.

DECEMBER NOTES

¶ By the way, in passing, I must say that no popular melody of recent times was so much played or so universally appreciated by the visitors at Yale's bicentennial as was the now famous Yale Boola. "Pop" Hirsh, the author, received a tremendous ovation. The vast audience assembled in the amphitheatre called for him until he was obliged to respond by directing the band while they played Boola. The Edison male quartette record, 7983, *Adelina, the Yale Boola Girl* is a clever adaptation of the now famous march.

¶ I confidently expect to be elected an honorary member of the United Burglars' Protective Association, in return for my discussion of the *pros* and *cons* of the Phonograph question in this month's issue; for my two burglar news items contain valuable tips to Mr. Raffles and Bunny and others like them.

¶ Miss Helen Miller Gould is a philanthropist of great discrimination. For why? I will tell you. News has just reached me that she has donated a complete Edison Home Phonograph outfit to each of twelve most prominent Y.M.C.A. branches here in the East. I am sure that nothing she could give would be more appreciated; for such a gift combines amusement, utility, instruction *and* philanthropy.

32 DECEMBER EDISON RECORDS

¶ Both Standard and Concert Records may be ordered from this list.

¶ Order Concert Records by No. and Letter C.

- | | | |
|-------|--|----------------------------------|
| 7983 | Adelina, the Yale Boola Girl, adapted to the
Yale Boola March | Male Quartette F. Q |
| 7984 | Molly come drive the cows home | Waltz song Har |
| 7985 | 2nd Reg't N. G. N. J. March, with Bugles | U. S. Marine Fife & Drum Corps |
| 7986 | And Then I Laughed | Laughing song Stw |
| 7987 | Du, Du, | Clarinet solo with variations Tu |
| 7988 | Go 'Way back and sit down | Medley two-step
Band E |
| 7989 | My Lady Hottentot | Coon song Co |
| 7990 | Edward German's Shepherds' Dance | Violin solo D' A |
| 7991 | I dreamed my mother was a queen | Male duet
Har & Sta |
| 7992 | A Soldier's Bride | Descriptive song My |
| 7993 | Raggy Raglans | Medley Banjo solo O |
| 7994 | Amoureuse Valse | Another Parisian success Orch. P |
| 7995 | Selection from The Messenger Boy | Orch. P |
| 7996 | Down in Louisiana, A darkey's excursion
descriptive selection | Orch. P |
| 7997 | Whoa Bill! | Comic Rube duet Co & Na |
| 7998 | Susie | Serio comic song Mac |
| 7999 | Good morning Carrie! | Medley two-step Band E |
| 12213 | Seguidillas Manchegas | Spanish V |
| 12214 | Son los superticiosos en la Mascote | Spanish V |
| 12215 | Wie Mag es wohl gekommen sein | German Mue |
| 12216 | Ave Maria Gounod | Latin song V |

NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH COMPANY

FACTORY, Orange, N.J., U.S.A.; NEW YORK OFFICE
135 Fifth Ave.; CHICAGO OFFICE, 144 Wabash
Ave.; FOREIGN DEPT., 15 Cedar St., N.Y.